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EXTRAMURAL PROGRAMS

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ASSISTANCE FOR YOUNG RESEARCH WORKERS IN THE HEALTH INFORMATION SCIENCES

Program Goals

The National Library of Medicine sponsors a number of activities related to better management and utilization of health sciences knowledge. The expanding growth of health knowledge, changing health care delivery patterns, and expanding technological capabilities raise numerous information science issues, many of them relevant to the computer and cognitive sciences. Their resolution requires creative research, conducted by talented, highly trained investigators. A program goal is to foster the growth of health information science and related disciplines. NLM offers special grants to young research workers in these areas:

1. There is a clear need for establishing the medical computer sciences as a research field in academic health science centers. These disciplines have already shown evidence that problems of medical knowledge representation, design of computerized consultant systems, and decision analysis in health offer unique challenges. In an area frequently referred to as "Computers in Medicine (Medical Informatics)," NLM's specific focus is on medical knowledge utilization from the perspectives of computer science, decision making, information science, and computational linguistics.
2. There is also a needed contribution from information scientists, research leaders in librarianship, and similar fields for addressing problems of organizing, retrieving, and delivering literature-based health knowledge. A program aim is to encourage younger workers in these disciplines to develop research interests and capabilities in health-related issues.

New Investigator Research Awards

These are small research project grants, tailored to the needs and circumstances of young scientists within five years of the doctorate. They offer an opportunity to assume full responsibility for design, justification, implementation, and publication of a research proposal. Project periods are limited to three years, with a maximum funding of $107,500, direct costs. (Full indirect costs are also provided, as with other research project grants.) The applicant or principal investigator should have completed appropriate training. Letters of reference are encouraged; such references serve reviewers in lieu of the longer personal bibliographies of more mature investigators.

Applicants should not have served previously as a principal investigator on a research project. Successful applicants must agree to keep NLM informed of their whereabouts and progress for six years after the project terminates.

Research Career Development Awards

These are given to institutions on behalf of candidates with promising research potential. The grants provide salary support so that the individual can develop and advance as an independent investigator. The proposal must set forth clearly that an award will make a significant difference to the individual's career growth.

The awards are granted for five-year periods. The maximum base salary per year is $30,000, but institutions may supplement salaries through non-Federal sources. Candidates must arrange for four letters of reference from persons knowledgeable about their training, current activities, and potential as research scientists.

Because these awards make it possible for institutions to allow awardees to spend substantially full time for research, applicants must show that research resources and support will be provided.

Application and Review

For New Investigator Research Awards, applicants use form PHS-398. The relevant guides, requirements, and other considerations are described in the *NIH Guide for*

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Grants and Contracts, Volume IX, No. 1, January 3, 1980, p. 67. The application forms and the Guide are available in academic medical centers.

Research Career Development Award candidates also use form PHS-398, following the additional instructions in the brochure "Policies Governing the National Institutes of Health Research Career Development Award."

Applications for these awards are reviewed by a peer group of non-Federal consultants. The usual review group for applications referred to the National Library of Medicine is the Biomedical Library Review Committee. The Committee's recommendations are considered in terms of program policy and direction by the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine. Grants are awarded following Board review.

Because the review process is necessarily highly selective, interested persons are encouraged to contact program staff for further information and advice:

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